

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 00872 181453Z

46

ACTION EUR-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 0872

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, CU

SUBJ: MFA OFFICIAL ON BREZHNEV'S CUBA VISIT

1. I CALLED JANUARY 18 ON D. A. ZHUKOV, CHIEF OF MFA LATIN AMERICA DIVISION, AND ASKED IF HE COULD COMMENT ON THE UPCOMING BREZHNEV VISIT TO CUBA.

2 ZHUKOV RECEIVED ME VERY CORDIALLY BUT COMMENTED MAINLY IN GENERALITIES. HE SAID THE VISIT HAS BEEN LONG EXPECTED, BUT BREZHNEV IS VERY BUSY AND COULD NOT HAVE GONE EARLIER. LIKE OTHER BREZHNEV FOREIGN VISITS, THIS ONE WILL ALSO PROBABLY BE IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF THE OVERALL INTERNATIONAL ATMOSPHERE. ZHUKOV SAID THE VISIT WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE END OF THE MONTH, BUT WOULD NOT BE ANY MORE SPECIFIC ABOUT DATES OR ABOUT MAKEUP OF DELEGATION. HE NOTED THAT BREZHNEV'S AIRCRAFT WILL COME CLOSE TO OR OVER U.S. TERRITORY, DEPENDING ON THE WEATHER, AND EXPRESSED THE BELIEF (WHICH I CONFIRMED) THAT THE PILOT COULD COUNT ON THE ASSISTANCE OF U.S. AIR SAFETY AUTHORITIES IF NEEDED.

3. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, ZHUKOV ASSERTED THAT SOVIET-CUBAN ECONOMIC TIES ARE CLOSE AND GOOD, BUT THIS QUESTION WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE ON THE AGENDA. SOVIET EXPORTS TO CUBA INCLUDE 4.5 TO 5 MILLION TONS PETROLEUM ANNUALLY; BLOCAKGE PREVENTS CUBA GETTING POL FROM ITS PREVIOUS SOURCES SUCH AS
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 00872 181453Z

VENEZUELA.

4. ZHUKOV COMMENTED THAT MOVEMENT IN U.S.- CUBAN RELATIONS IS UP TO THE U.S. WHEN I CITED SECRETARY'S STATEMENT THAT U.S. ATTITUDE IS GOVERNED IN PART BY CUBAN INTEREST IN EXPORTING REVOLUTION TO LATIN AMERICA, ZHUKOV BEGAN BY ASSERTING THAT COMMUNIST PARTIES DO NOT ENGAGE IN THE EXPORT OF REVOLUTION. UNDER QUESTIONING HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOMETIMES THERE ARE DIFFERING IDEAS AMONG PARTIES, BUT THIS IS NOT A MAJOR PROBLEM. HE THEN REFERRED TO U.S. DESIRE THAT CUBA SHOULD BREAK ITS MILITARY TIES WITH SOVIET UNION, WHICH IS HARD TO UNDERSTAND SINCE IT IS U.S., NOT USSR, WHICH HAS MILITARY BASE IN CUBA. HE CONCLUDED THAT QUESTION OF U.S.- CUBAN RELATIONS IS FOR U.S. AND CUBA TO DISCUSS, NOT FOR INTER-MEDIARIES.

5. HE NOTED THAT SOVIET UNION LACKS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH 10 LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES BUT DOES NOT PRESS THIS MATTER. WHENEVER ANOTHER COUNTRY IS INTERESTED IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, SOVIET UNION IS HAPPY TO CONSIDER IT.

6. AT CONCLUSION OF CONVERSATION, IN CONTEXT OF REFERENCES TO IMPROVED U.S.- SOVIET RELATIONS, ZHUKOV MADE POINT THAT HE DIFFERS WITH AMERICAN SPOKESMEN WHO PUT PROBLEM ONLY IN TERMS OF AVOIDING NUCLEAR WAR; HE BELIEVES WE SHOULD WORK TO AVOID ALL WAR AND ALL SUFFERING BY PEOPLE, AND FOR ELIMINATION OF ALL TENSIONS.
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